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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/976,033	10/15/2001	Fumio Tamura	040894-5732	1603

55694 7590 05/16/2006

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EXAMINER

NG, EUNICE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2626

DATE MAILED: 05/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	09/976,033		TAMURA, FUMIO	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Eunice Ng		2626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 February 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. In response to the Office Action mailed Sept. 6, 2005, Applicants have submitted an Amendment, filed Feb. 6, 2006, amending claims 1-8, without adding new matter, and arguing to traverse claim rejections.

Specification

2. Applicants' have changed the title to a more descriptive one, as required by the Examiner. This title is accepted.

3. Applicant's have amended the specification, drawings and claims in response to the Examiner's requirement and are consistent with the Examiner's suggested changes. Thus, the objection has been withdrawn.

4. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Drawings

5. The drawings were received on Feb. 6, 2006. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. Applicants have amended claims 1-8 to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors in accordance with the Examiner's comments. Thus, the rejection has been withdrawn.

Claim Objections

7. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities: In the last line of the claim, replace “as a speech” with --as speech--. Appropriate correction is required.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-8 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

9. Applicant argues that “the Office Action has misapplied Brotman against the claims of the instant application because the disclosure of Brotman is based on a zip code which the user initially enters to search the objective address” (p. 13, Remarks, ll. 6-8). The Examiner respectfully disagrees because the abstract clearly states “receiving a *spoken* zip code from a user [emphasis added]” (ll. 5-6).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

10. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

11. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Brotman et al. (hereinafter “Brotman”), US Patent No. 6,236,967 (filed Jun. 19, 1998).

Regarding claims 1 and 7, Brotman teaches a method and apparatus for speech recognition comprising:

speech input means for inputting speech (speech data, col. 6, ll. 53-57; abstract, ll. 5-6 teaches “receiving a spoken zip code from a user”);

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spot information memory means for storing information relative to spots (street names, street numbers and zip codes, Fig. 1, element 109 and col. 4, l. 31 – col. 5, l. 19);

storage means for storing object words indicative of spots within said spot information memory means (recognized address, Fig. 1, element 110 and col. 6, ll. 3-9);

computing means for acquiring similarities between the speech inputting from said speech input means and the object words stored in said storage means (matching, col. 5, ll. 64-67; abstract, ll. 5-6, teaches “[a]fter receiving a spoken zip code from a user, the corresponding list of address identifiers is retrieved”; ll. 9-11, “[t]hese plurality of choices contain words that rhyme with or sound like other address identifiers located in the retrieval group of address identifiers”, ll. 13-15, “the system queries the database for a match between the spoken address identifier and the stored address identifier”); and

recognition means for recognizing the speech corresponding to one of the object words from the similarities acquired by said computing means (Fig. 1, element 108 and col. 4, ll. 13-41),

wherein when a plurality of object words are recognized (rhyme or sound alike) by said recognition means, a limiting word (range of street numbers) for distinguishing between said plurality of object words is sampled from said spot information memory means and stored as an object word corresponding to said limiting word in said storage means (col. 5, ll. 20-29 and col. 6, ll. 6-7), and

wherein the object word corresponding to said limiting word is recognized as speech (col. 7, ll. 10-38).

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Regarding claim 2, Brotman teaches an apparatus for speech recognition

comprising:

speech input means for inputting speech (speech data, col. 6, ll. 53-57; abstract, ll. 5-6 teaches “receiving a spoken zip code from a user”);

storage means for storing object words indicative of spots within said spot information memory means (street names, street numbers and zip codes, Fig. 1, element 109 and col. 4, l. 31 – col. 5, l. 19);

spot information memory means for storing information relative to spots (recognized address, Fig. 1, element 110 and col. 6, ll. 3-9);

output means for producing a request message (prompt) urging a user to input said object words (Fig. 4, step 401);

computing means for acquiring similarities between speech inputted from said speech input means and the object words stored in said storage means (matching, col. 5, ll. 64-67; abstract, ll. 5-6, teaches “[a]fter receiving a spoken zip code from a user, the corresponding list of address identifiers is retrieved”; ll. 9-11, “[t]hese plurality of choices contain words that rhyme with or sound like other address identifiers located in the retrieval group of address identifiers”, ll. 13-15, “the system queries the database for a match between the spoken address identifier and the stored address identifier”); and

recognition means for recognizing the speech corresponding to one of the object words from the similarities acquired by said computing means (Fig. 1, element 108 and col. 4, ll. 13-41),

wherein when a plurality of object words are recognized (rhyme or sound alike) by said recognition means, a limiting word (address identifier) for distinguishing between

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said plurality of object words is sampled from said spot information memory means and stored as an object word (recognized address) corresponding to said limiting word in said storage means (col. 5, ll. 20-29 and col. 6, ll. 5-9),

wherein the limiting word is produced as the request message (prompt) by said output means (col. 7, ll. 10-33), and

wherein the object word corresponding to said limiting word is recognized as speech (col. 7, ll. 10-38).

Regarding claim 3, Brotman teaches wherein said spot information memory means stores, as information relative to spots, a plurality of facility names and detailed classifying information and rough classifying information to which each facility name belongs which are correlated with each other (street names, street numbers and zip codes, Fig. 1, element 109 and col. 4, l. 31 – col. 5, l. 19).

Regarding claim 4, Brotman teaches wherein when the plurality of object words are recognized (rhyme or sound alike) by said recognition means, a limiting word (street name) for distinguishing said plurality of object words is sampled from said spot information memory means and stored as the object word in said storage means (col. 5, ll. 20-29 and col. 6, ll. 6-7), and

wherein when said plurality of object words are distinguished from one another in terms of rough classifying information (within same zip code), only one at a higher level of the object words corresponding to the limiting word (street name) is produced as a

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request voice by said output means and the object word corresponding to said limiting word is recognized as speech (col. 5, ll. 20-29 and col. 6, ll. 6-7).

Regarding claims 5 and 6, Brotman teaches wherein said recognition means recognizes an object word with similarity within a prescribed range, acquired by said computing means, as the recognized object word (col. 5, ll. 20-29).

Regarding claim 8, Brotman teaches: producing a request message urging a user to input said object words (Fig. 4, step 401); and producing the limiting word as the request message (voice prompt) (col. 7, ll. 10-33).

The rest of the limitations of claim 8 are the same as or similar to those of claims 1 and 7, rejected above, and thus are rejected for the same reasons.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: US Patent No. 7,020,612 B2 to Tamura teaches a facility retrieval apparatus and method wherein area names and classified facility names that are fed in through a given procedure are recognized as a narrowing-down condition.

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eunice Ng whose telephone number is 571-272-2854. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Hudspeth can be reached on 571-272-7843. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

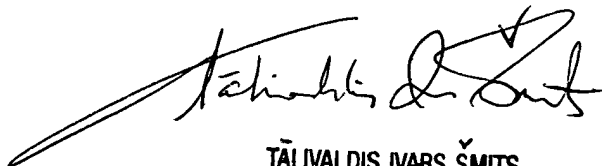
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15. Please note the recent change in art unit designation from 2654 to 2626.

EN

May 8, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tālivaldis Ivars Šmits', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

TĀLIVALDIS IVARS ŠMITS
PRIMARY EXAMINER